Pamphlet
.HT-233

"Canada at War"

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
DOMINION PARLIAMENT
AUGUST, 1914

SPEECH

By

Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Laird Borden

K.C., P.C., G.C.M.G.

"As to our duty, all are agreed; we stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain and the other British dominions in this quarrel. And that duty we shall not fail to fulfil as the honour of Canada demands. Not for love of battle, not for lust of conquest, not for greed of possessions, but for the cause of honour, to maintain solemn pledges, to uphold principles of liberty, to withstand forces that would convert the world into an armed camp; yea, in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonour, we have entered into this war; and while gravely conscious of the tremendous issues involved and of all the sacrifices that they may entail, we do not shrink from them, but with firm hearts we abide the event."

SIR ROBERT LAIRD BORDEN, K.C., P.C., G.C.M.G.

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"CANADA AT WAR"

A special session of the Canadian Parliament was opened on 18th August, 1914, to consider and confirm certain emergency measures adopted by the Government, on account of the outbreak of war, to pass the necessary authority for sending Canadian Military Contingents to the front as well as financing this and other undertakings for the defence of Canadian and Imperial interests, and to obtain such legislation as would enable the administration for the benefit of the people to deal with the conditions which would arise from Canada and the empire being engaged in a European war. The session lasted five days. Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister, delivered the following speech on the address to his Royal Highness, the Governor-General, in reply to the speech from the throne:

Mr. Speaker, I desire to associate myself with the words of appreciation uttered by my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) with regard to the speeches to which we have just listened from the mover and the seconder of the Address. These speeches fully recognize the duty of unity at the present time, not only in Canada but throughout the British Dominions, to meet a crisis, a possible danger such as this country, this empire, has not confronted for one hundred years at least. I have listened, too, with the utmost interest and profound admiration to the patriotic speech which has just fallen from my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). Already, even before Parliament has been called, he had an-

nounced to his friends and to the country that his meetings were discontinued, that the voice of party strife was hushed for the time being, and that he and his friends would co-operate in every way with those upon whom falls the duty, the very responsible duty at this moment, of administering the affairs of this country, in taking all such measures as may be necessary for the defence of Canada and for maintaining the honour and integrity of the empire whose flag floats over us.

AN APPALLING WAR.

The war has come upon us in the end very suddenly indeed, and perhaps we have not all adequately considered the awful responsibility that must have rested upon the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister when they and their colleagues took the issue which meant war —which meant the first general European war for a hundred years, and beyond all question the most appalling war history has ever known. We read in the press of the haggard faces and the tremulous lips of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey when they made their announcements; but there as here they were sustained by the thought that for the time being party strife was stilled; and we do not forget that those in the British Isles who had protested most strongly in the first place against the participation of Great Britain in this war united in upholding the hands of the Government and in maintaining the interests and duty of the empire.

WHAT LED UP TO IT.

I need not dwell very long upon the incidents which led up to this war. Last evening I had the opportunity of reading with the deepest possible interest the White Paper which was laid upon the table of the House to-day, and which gives a very full and detailed history of the untiring efforts of Sir Edward Grey—who has been rightly characterized by his colleague the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, as the Peacemaker of Europe—to prevent war. The splendid efforts made by Sir Edward Grey to preserve the peace of Europe command our warmest admiration; when that proved impossible he most earnestly endeavoured to find some way of escape, short of dishonour, by which Great Britain might remain neutral in that awful contest. The armed forces of Europe, as we all know, during the past twenty or twenty-five years have been increasing beyond measure; and the closest students of the world's politics have believed for many years past that war was bound to come. It did come, and with startling suddenness; and it is my duty to say that after reading the documents to which I have alluded, after giving them the most careful and attentive consideration which was permitted to me in the short time that has elapsed since their arrival, I am convinced that no government ever with more whole-hearted earnestness sought to keep the peace of the world and the peace of this empire than did His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. It has been the policy of the British Government for many years past to seek reduction of armaments

and thus to lessen the danger that lurks in the enormous armed forces with which the nations of Europe have confronted each other. At and ever since The Hague Conference in 1907, British statesmen have pleaded with the nations of the world to reduce their armaments. At The Hague Conference, and on many occasions since, Great Britain offered to give up what would seem to be very material advantages to her in time of war, if by such concessions she could induce Germany and other countries to abate the awful increase in armaments of war which has been proceeding. Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Churchill, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Acland—I have their utterances under my hand and could read them to the House if there were occasion—time after time, year after year, on occasion after occasion, the British Government has shown itself most truly and earnestly desirous of bringing about such conditions in Europe as would

MAKE FOR PERMANENT PEACE

if that could be accomplished. Those who may read the papers that have been laid upon the table of the House to-day will find that in the very last moments of peace, before Great Britain finally embarked in the conflict she made this earnest proposal of the German Government: That if this most appalling crisis could be passed she would use every influence and every effort that she could command to bring about such an understanding between Germany and her ally on the one hand, and Russia and France on the other hand as would relieve Germany and Austria from any possible

apprehension of attack from that quarter; and the minister declared himself to be inspired with a very full confidence that if this crisis could be passed, that great result would be brought about.

I will not dwell for more than a moment on the earlier aspects of the war—the war which broke out between Austria and Servia; but I cannot escape the conviction, after having read the documents to which I have alluded—and I do not think any member of this House or any man in this country can escape the conviction—that there was a deliberate determination in the first place

TO FORCE WAR UPON SERVIA,

regardless of any humiliation to which she might consent or of any consequences which might result from that war. I say that such is my deliberate conviction. The most imperious demand ever made upon any free nation in the world was made by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy on Servia on the 23rd day of July. It was not to be called an ultimatum, as they afterwards explained; it was to be called a "demarche," with a time limit, and under the time limit the reply to that demand, made on the 23rd July, had to be delivered not later than six o'clock on the evening of 25th July. I have a summary of the demand and of Servia's answer under my hand, and I say that a perusal of that demand and of the answer which Servia gave to it impresses us with the truth of what Sir Edward Grey stated when he said:

It seemed to me that the Servian reply already involved the greatest humiliation to Servia that I had ever seen a country undergo.

All demands, demands of the most extreme character, were conceded, except one, and that was rejected only conditionally; and the demand which was not conceded was one which would have given to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy for the time being control almost of the Servian judicial system, in so far as inquiry was to be made into certain matters connected with the regrettable assassination of the unfortunate Archduke. If the reply was not considered satisfactory,

SERVIA OFFERED ARBITRATION

or a reference to The Hague tribunal. The reply of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy to that humiliating submission of Servia was astonishing; it affirmed that the answer was not worthy to be regarded, and it was followed by an almost instant declaration of war. But, as you know, the British Government, and particularly the Foreign Minister, upon whom this tremendous responsibility rested, made every possible attempt at mediation even after that. On the 26th and 27th days of July he asked the great powers of the world to join in mediation, and every one of the great powers was ready to join in mediation except Germany. Germany accepted it in principle, but after that there was merely inaction and evasion.

NEUTRALITY OF BELGIUM.

In the end the efforts at mediation were absolutely fruitless. All pacific action was evaded, and the question arose as to what should be the course of Great Britain with regard to the war. Great Britain sought by every possible means, by negotiation and otherwise, that war should be carried on under such conditions that her intervention would not be necessary. And the great question which arose at once was as to the neutrality and independence of Belgium, and to have that neutrality and independence respected by the great powers of Europe, particularly Germany and France, both of whom, in common with Great Britain, had guaranteed that neutrality, first of all in 1831, afterwards in 1839, and again, so far as Germany and France were concerned, during the period of the Franco-Prussian war. I need not read the disposition of the treaty. It provided that Belgium should for all time to come be an absolutely neutral and independent country. That was guaranteed by France; that was guaranteed by Great Britain; that was guaranteed by Germany; that was guaranteed by all the great powers of Europe. So great was the interest of Great Britain in this regard during the Franco-Prussian war that she negotiated two treaties at that time, one with the North German Confederation and one with France. The treaty which she negotiated with the North German Confederation provided that the neutrality of Belgium should be respected, and if the neutrality of Bel-

gium were not respected by France during that war, then Great Britain bound herself to fight with the North German Confederation against France in defence of Belgian neutrality. She concluded also another treaty with France by which in the same terms she bound herself with France that if the North German Confederation during that war should violate the neutrality of Belgium, she would fight with France against the North German Confederation in support of Belgian independence and Belgian neutrality.

GERMANY DELIBERATELY VIOLATED NEUTRALITY.

I cannot resist the conclusion, and I do not think that any man who reads these documents can resist the conclusion, that it was the deliberate intention of the Government of Germany, formed many years ago, to violate the neutrality and independence of Belgium in case war should break out with France. Every man in this country, every man throughout the world, knows that plans of campaign are not made after war breaks out. Plans of campaign are made long in advance, and the German plan of campaign which has been carried out in the present war is one which involved as a first step in their warlike operations the absolute violation of the independence of Belgium. Let me read a few words from Sir Edward Grey's speech in that regard. He said:

> We were sounded in the course of last week as to whether if a guarantee were given that, after the war, Bel-

gian integrity would be preserved, that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality.

In speaking of the interests of the small nationalities of Europe in this event, he pointed out what will commend itself to the judgment of every man in this House: that once a free nation, once any of these small nationalities commits itself to the principle of having its territory overrun by the armed forces of another nation without offering any resistance, from that time not only the neutrality but the independence of that country is gone. Sir Edward Grey went on to say this with regard to Holland and Belgium:

> The smaller states in that region of Europe ask but one thing. Their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity but that their independence should be interfered with. If in this war which is before Europe the neutrality of one of those countries is violated, if the troops of one of the combatants violate its neutrality and no action be taken to resent it, at the end of the war, whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone.

Further on he quoted with striking effect the words of Mr. Gladstone, uttered, if I remember correctly, at the time of the Franco-German war of 1870. Mr. Gladstone said:

> We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether under the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power,

would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participators in the sin.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT ACTED INTERESTS EMPIRE.

That was the question which presented itself for the consideration of the ministers of the United Kingdom, and that was the question which the British Government, acting, I think, as they were bound to act in the interests of this empire as a whole, declared that they could not answer except by affirming that the whole power and resources of this empire were pledged to defend the independence and integrity of Belgium as guaranteed by the treaties of 1831 and 1839. It is true that a promise was made that after the war was over the neutrality of Belgium would be absolutely respected, but the words of Mr. Asquith put the case with regard to that as cogently and forcibly as it could be put. He said:

> What would have been the position of Great Britain to-day in the face of that spectacle if we had assented to this infamous proposal? Yes, and what are we to get in return for the betrayal of our friends and the dishonour of our obligations? What are we to get in return? A promise —nothing more; a promise as to what Germany would do in certain eventualities; a promise be it observed—I am sorry to have to say it but it must be put upon record—given by a power which was at that very moment announcing its intention to violate its own treaty and inviting us to do the same. I can only say, if we had dallied or temporized, we, as a Government, should have covered ourselves with dishonour, and we should have betrayed the interests of this country, of which we are trustees.

NO QUARREL WITH GERMAN PEOPLE.

And I am sure that every man in Canada will say Amen to Mr. Asquith's declaration.

I was glad indeed to listen to the words of my right hon. friend with regard to our attitude toward the German people. We have absolutely no quarrel with the German people. I believe that they are a peaceable people, that they are not naturally a warlike people, although unfortunately they are dominated at the present time by a military autocracy. No one can overestimate what civilization and the world owe to Germany. In literature, in science, art and philosophy, in almost every department of human knowledge and activity, they have stood in the very forefront of the world's advancement. Nearly half a million of the very best citizens of Canada are of German origin, and I am sure that no one would for one moment desire to utter any word or use any expression in debate which would wound the self-respect or hurt the feelings of any of our fellow citizens of German descent. So far as those who were born in Germany or Austria-Hungary are concerned, and who have made Canada their adopted home, I may explain that since the outbreak of war we have had to consider the disposition of those who under the laws of their country are bound to perform military service, and we have adopted this principle which I think will commend itself to the judgment and common sense of this House. We have no reason to believe that those people are inspired by the mili-

tant tendencies which influence the German Government at the present time or the Austrian Government for that matter. We have no reason to doubt, and we do not doubt, that these people will be absolutely true to the country of their adoption. Therefore, we have declared by Order in Council and by proclamation under the authority of His Royal Highness the Governor General that those people who were born in Germany or in Austria-Hungary and have come to Canada as adopted citizens of this country, whether they have become naturalized or not, are entitled to the protection of the law in Canada and shall receive it, that they shall

NOT BE MOLESTED OR INTERFERED WITH,

unless any among them should desire to aid or abet the enemy or leave this country for the purpose of fighting against Great Britain and her allies. If any of them should be so minded we shall be obliged to follow the laws and usages of war in that regard with all the humanity that may be possible. But up to the present, we have seen no disposition among these people to do anything of the kind. They are pursuing their usual avocations and behaving themselves as good citizens of Canada. We honour and respect them for it, and have every confidence that they will pursue that course throughout this crisis, however long it may continue.

PRECAUTIONS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT.

It is proper that I should state to the House some matters which have to do with the precautions which the Government was obliged to take on the outbreak of the war. I need not say that in the United Kingdom among those most closely in touch with these matters, especially among the military and naval authorities in the United Kingdom, there has been for many years a conviction that some effective organization in the dominions of the empire should be provided so that an emergency such as that which arose so suddenly would not find us altogether in confusion.

Documents were presented to the Government of Canada, and submitted to me for consideration by the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Sir Joseph Pope, last December; and on the 6th day of January, 1914, after having gone carefully over the documents which were so submitted, I wrote to him the following letter which I think it desirable to communicate to the House:

Prime Minister's Office,
Canada,

Ottawa, January 6, 1914.

Dear Sir Joseph Pope,—

I have carefully considered the papers which you left with me a short time ago relating to a proposed conference of deputy heads for the purpose of concerting measures to be taken by the various departments of the Government, primarily concerned, in the contingency of an outbreak of war affecting His Majesty's dominions, and more particularly, of considering the preparation of a War Book which

shall set forth in detail the action to be taken by every responsible official at the seat of Government in the event of such an emergency.

The suggestion meets with my approval, and as the first notification of the outbreak of hostilities would emanate from your department, I authorize you, as Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, to call such a conference of deputy heads, to consist in the first instance of (1) yourself as chairman; (2) the Governor General's Secretary; (3) the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence; (4) the Deputy Minister of Justice; (5) the Deputy Minister of Naval Affairs; (6) the Commissioner of Customs; (7) the Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries; (8) the Deputy Postmaster General; (9) the Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, with Major Gordon Hall, Director of Military operations (representing the Department of Militia and Defence), and Mr. R. M. Stephens, Drector of Gunnery (representing the Department of the Naval Service), as joint secretaries.

You will keep me informed from time to time of the progress and results of your deliberations.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) R. L. Borden.

Sir Joseph Pope,
Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa.

NO DELAY IN TAKING ACTION.

The work went on during the winter months and if the House will permit me to do so I can describe what has been accomplished more conveniently by reading a memorandum which has been prepared by the chairman, and which is as follows:

Memorandum relating to a conference of deputy heads of certain departments of the public service, which met in Ottawa in the early part of 1914 to concert measures for

the drawing up of a general Defence Scheme or War Book, embodying a record of the action to be taken in time of emergency by every responsible official at the seat of Government.

In 1913 the Secretary of State for the Colonies communicated to this Government certain memoranda of the Oversea Defence Committee outlining the action to be taken by the naval and military authorities when relations with any foreign power become strained, and on the outbreak of war. The suggestion was conveyed that the governments of the various self-governing dominions might advantageously prepare a similar record in each case to meet such contingencies. By the direction of the Government these recommendations were considered by the local Interdepartmental Committee (which is composed of the expert officers of the Naval and Militia Departments sitting together). The committee reported that a conference of those deputy ministers whose departments would primarily be affected by an outbreak of war, should be held to consider how best to give effect to the proposals of the Oversea Committee.

This suggestion was submitted to the Prime Minister and received the approval of the Government. Thereupon, a meeting of the undermentioned deputy heads, together with the Governor General's Military Secretary, was held under the chairmanship of Sir Joseph Pope, Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, on the 12th January, 1914:

The Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence,
The Deputy Minister of the Naval Service,
The Deputy Minister of Justice,
The Deputy Minister of Customs,
The Deputy Postmaster General,
The Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals,
The Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries, with

Major Gordon Hall, director of military operations (representing the Department of Militia and Defence), and Lieutenant R. M. Stephens, director of gunnery (representing the Department of the Naval Service) as joint secretaries.

At this meeting it was decided that the secretaries should acquaint each member of the conference of the

various contingencies which might arise in the event of which the co-operation of his department would be required; thus enabling him to decide what steps would be necessary to give effect to the decisions of the conference, and to detail an officer of his department to confer with the secretaries in the actual compilation of the War Book.

Meetings of subcommittees were subsequently held from time to time at which the necessary action to be taken by the various departments in the event of certain contingencies arising was carefully considered and determined. Each department then proceeded to develop its own line of action in detail, the whole being subsequently co-ordinated and incorporated in one scheme, indicating the course to be followed by the Government as a whole on an emergency arising. This scheme was then submitted to and approved by the Prime Minister.

The taking of these precautionary measures proved most fortunate, as on the receipt of intelligence, during the last few weeks of the serious situation in Europe, this Government found itself in a position to take, without the slightest delay, such action as the exigencies of the moment demanded, concurrently with His Majesty's Government and with the sister dominions of the empire.

17th August, 1914.

THIS FORESIGHT VERY ADVANTAGEOUS.

I cannot overestimate the great advantage to the country which resulted from having these matters considered, determined and arranged in advance in conjunction with the Imperial Government. The arrangements which were instantly necessary, and to which I shall allude more in detail in a moment, were made without the slightest confusion. All communications from the Imperial authorities were acted upon promptly and with, as I say, an entire absence of confusion. Every detail had been previously worked out with precision, and

I am informed by the chairman of the conference that especially are the thanks of the people of this country due to Major Gordon Hall and Mr. Stephens, upon whom a very large part of the work in making these arrangements necessarily devolved.

In connection with the outbreak of hostilities, the Government have been obliged to take some extraordinary steps and certain of these steps will require ratification by Parliament. We realized, and I hope every member of this House and all the people of this country will realize, that there was a tremendous responsibility upon us, and I can assure the House that in so far as we took any action which might require the ratification and approval of Parliament, we took it only because we believed that in the exercise of our duty we were bound to do so before Parliament could possibly assemble. On the very day before the war broke out we purchased two submarines, having first consulted with the Admiralty. Crews have been procured for both, and I believe the naval officer in command on the Pacific coast at present is an expert in such matters, and that the crews are already competent to make these submarines useful for the defence of our coast and of our shipping if occasion should require. The Rainbow, already in commission, was furnished with the necessary ammunition and stores and her crew was supplemented by a number of naval volunteers. I think that great praise is due to those in command of her for the courageous act which they undertook in going south in face of two modern German cruisers to assist in

bringing back the small boats Algerine and Shearwater which were then in the south. The Niobe has also been put in commission as she possesses some fighting strength, and she will be manned in part by the crews of the Shearwater and the Algerine and in part by British naval reservists. All of these boats have been placed under the direction of the Admiralty by virtue of the authority contained in that behalf in the Naval Service Act, 1910.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH BRITISH GOVT.

The correspondence which has passed between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United Kingdom, and also the correspondence which has taken place between Mr. Perley and myself, as well as the Orders in Council, have been laid on the table. I may say that on returning to Ottawa on the morning of August 1, I consulted with such of my colleagues as were in Ottawa at that time and I sent two telegrams both of which have since been made public, one yesterday and one on a previous occasion. The first telegram I sent on August 1 is as follows:

Aug. 1, 1914.

Secret. In view of the impending danger of war involving the empire, my advisers are anxiously considering the most effective means of rendering every possible aid and they will welcome any suggestion and advice which Imperial naval and military authorities may deem it expedient to offer. They are confident that a considerable force would be available for service abroad. A question has been

mooted respecting the status of any Canadian force serving abroad as under section sixty-nine of Canadian Militia Act active militia can only be placed on active service beyond Canada for the defence thereof. It has been suggested that regiments might enlist as Imperial troops for stated period, Canadian Government undertaking to make all necessary financial provision for their equipment, pay, and maintenance. This proposal has not yet been maturely considered here and my advisers would be glad to have views of Imperial Government thereon.

The answer which we received and which was not made public at the time, as war had not yet broken out, was on the 3rd of August, and it is as follows:

With reference to your cypher telegram 2nd Aug., please inform your ministers that their patriotic readiness to render every aid is deeply appreciated by His Majesty's Government, but they would prefer postponing detailed observations on the suggestion put forward, pending further developments. As soon as situation appears to call for further measures I will telegraph you again.

That telegram is significant because it shows that then, on the 3rd August, the Imperial Government not only were using every endeavour to preserve peace, but had hopes that peace might be preserved. Therefore, they made their answer to us in the guarded language which I have just quoted.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN: Is that signed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: That is signed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Harcourt. All these communications go from His

Royal Highness to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the replies are received in the same way.

On the 4th day of August they sent us the following further telegram with regard to the same matter:

> Though there seems to be no immediate necessity for any request on our part for an expeditionary force from Canada, I think, in view of their generous offer, your ministers would be wise to take all legislative and other steps by which they would be enabled without delay to provide such a force in case it should be required later.

On the 6th day of August they sent us the following despatch:

> With reference to my telegram of August 4, His Majesty's Government gratefully accept offer of your ministers to send expeditionary force to this country, and would be glad if it could be despatched as soon as possible. Suggested composition follows.

The suggested composition which followed later was, as stated by my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, to whom I have communicated several of these despatches in the meantime, that we should send forward a division comprising about 22,500 men.

On the 1st day of August I also sent through His Royal Highness the Governor General the following telegram:

> My advisers, while expressing their most earnest hope that peaceful solution of existing international difficulties may be achieved and their strong desire to co-operate in every possible way for that purpose, wish me to convey to His Majesty's Government the firm assurance that, if un-

happily war should ensue, the Canadian people will be united in a common resolve to put forth every effort and to make every sacrifice necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honour of our Empire.

WELCOMED WHOLEHEARTED CO-OPERATION CANADA.

To which on the 2nd day of August the following reply was received:

With reference to your telegram 1st August, His Majesty's Government gratefully welcome the assurance of your Government that in the present crisis they may rely on wholehearted co-operation of the people of Canada.

I spoke in that regard of the united spirit and action of the people of Canada, and subsequent events have shown that I was not in any wise mistaken in placing that estimate upon the sentiments of the Canadian people. The men of Canada who are going to the front are going as free men by voluntary enlistment, as free men in a free country. They are coming forward voluntarily for the purpose of serving this Dominion and this empire in a time of peril. Already I am informed by the Minister of Militia that thousands more than will be required have volunteered to go. I desire to express my absolute concurrence with the view put forward by the hon. member for South Oxford (Mr. Sutherland) in his eloquent address, namely, that it is the duty of the people of Canada and of the Government of Canada too, so far as may be necessary, to make all suitable provision for the families and children of those who are going to the

front. We are giving to our country and our empire at this time of our best, and we are proud to do it; but we must not forget our duty to those who are left behind. Neither the people of Canada nor the Government of Canada will ever for one moment forget that duty.

GRANARY OF THE EMPIRE.

There has also been made public a telegram which we despatched to the mother country with regard to a provision which we thought might be very welcome, not only for the material assistance which it would afford, but as a reminder to the mother country that the people of the dominions were with them in every sense, and that this great Dominion of ours has been justly called the granary of the Empire. Therefore, we sent on the 6th day of August through His Royal Highness the Governor General this telegram:

> My advisers request me to inform you that the people of Canada through their Government desire to offer one million bags of flour of ninety-eight pounds each as a gift to the people of United Kingdom to be placed at the disposal of His Majesty's Government and to be used for such purposes as they may deem expedient.

It was thought desirable that this should go as a gift from people to people, but that it should be placed at the disposal of the Imperial Government to be used for such purposes as they might determine. We received in reply to that the following telegram under date of August 7, expressing the greatest possible appreciation:

On behalf of the people of the United Kingdom His Majesty's Government accept with deep gratitude the splendid and welcome gift of flour from Canada which will be of the greatest use for the steadying of prices and relief of distress in this country. We can never forget the generosity and promptitude of this gift and the patriotism from which it springs.

WHAT THE PROVINCES ARE DOING.

I desire to express appreciation at this moment of the action of the provinces of Canada and of individuals in Canada during the past week or ten days. From provinces, from individuals, gifts have come, great and small, showing the intense eagerness of the people and of every province in Canada to associate themselves in this great issue with what we are doing in the Dominion as a whole, and with all that is being done in every dominion of the empire. The people as a whole, not only here in Canada, but in the mother country itself and in every dominion will, I am sure, feel the most grateful appreciation and render the warmest thanks for all the aid thus tendered.

I have spoken already of our action with regard to reservists. I have said that we have proclaimed to them that as citizens of Canada they are entitled to the protection of our laws and that they are not to be molested, unless they attempt to leave this country to fight against us, or to give aid to the enemy or otherwise violate obligations undertaken as citizens of Canada.

I might allude to the fact that we found it necessary to establish censorship. That was regarded as absolutely essential at the outset; and we

took upon ourselves to order censorship, trusting that Parliament, in so far as might be necessary, would approve our action afterwards. We had also to take measures with regard to the detention of ships. All such matters had been arranged by the inter-departmental committee. We had also to provide for the prohibition of the export of certain articles. That prohibition has since been relaxed in one or two particulars, after consultation with the Imperial authorities; and in so far as the prohibition may not be found necessary for the purposes of war it perhaps may be further relaxed from time to time.

UNANIMOUS AT BACK MOTHER COUNTRY.

From every part of Canada we have had most unmistakable evidence of the determination of the people of this Dominion to support the mother country and the other dominions which are bound together by the strongest tie of all, that is, the tie of absolute British liberty and the tie of perfect self-government. Those ties bind together the provinces of Canada in this Dominion. Those ties bind together the dominions of the empire with the mother country; and we rejoice to know that, in a time of stress and perhaps of peril such as this, they have proved the strongest possible ties that could be devised.

It might not be out of place to say a word with regard to the navy, which has been alluded

to very eloquently by my right hon. friend and by the mover and seconder of the Address.

It is barely two weeks since war broke out. Already nearly every pathway across the ocean has been cleared. Our foreign commerce has been but little interfered with, very little indeed. The splendid organization of the British navy has enabled this to be accomplished. Those who are familiar with the religious services used at sea will remember that prayer goes up from the

MEN OF THE NAVY,

in peace as in war, that they may be a safeguard to their Sovereign and his dominions and a security for such as pass upon the seas on their lawful occasions. The quaint words of that old prayer express as perfectly as may be that which is most essential for the security and integrity of this empire, a safe pathway across the seas. Surely that prayer has been fulfilled even in this appalling war, for already the silent victory on the sea has been won. The Atlantic now is, and we have every reason to believe that the Pacific shortly will be practically as safe and secure for those under the protection of the flag as in times of peace.

In conection with the gift to which I alluded a moment ago, the gift to British people, of a million bags of flour, may I add that during the past week we have been in correspondence with Mr. Perley with a view to

OFFERING TO THE GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE,

if they should desire to accept it, a hospital of fifty beds which we will be prepared to acquire, equip and maintain. The proposal has been put forward through Mr. Perley, as acting High Commissioner, who had been instructed to ascertain the wishes of the French Government with regard thereto. I believe a similar proposition has been made by the British Government to the French Government. But in the appalling stress and pressure of affairs which confront the Government of France at present, the British Government have not been able to obtain an answer to their own request, and so we have not been able to obtain an answer to ours. But I thought it desirable that I should here publicly state that the Government of Canada, with the approval of Parliament which I am sure will not be withheld, are prepared to establish, equip and maintain, in Paris or elsewhere, a hospital, making provision for fifty beds for the comfort of those who may be wounded in the war.

NO COURAGE BE FOUND WANTING.

The leader of the Opposition has alluded to the uncertainty of human events, and particularly events such as are before us in the great war which now confronts the empire. True, the future is shrouded in uncertainty, but I believe that the people of Canada look forth upon it with steadfast

eyes. But, let me say that while we are now upborne by the exaltation and enthusiasm which come in the first days of a national crisis so great that it moves the hearts of all men, we must not forget that days may come when our patience, our endurance and our fortitude will be tried to the utmost. In those days let us see to it that no heart grow faint and that no courage be found wanting. I was very much touched by the words of a despatch which came in only an hour ago—these despatches are sent to us from hour to hour. It shows a spirit which later we may need to emulate when perhaps tidings shall come to us that those of our best and our dearest who have gone to the front have fallen in battle. I will read the words of the despatch which are very simple and direct:

> Paris, Aug. 19:—(11.10 a.m.)—A woman with four sons in the French army to-day walked slowly down the steps of one of the municipal offices where relatives are officially informed whether soldiers are dead, wounded or unreported. She was exceedingly white but her emotion was greater than could be expressed in tears. A friend came up quickly and said: "Have you good news? I am so glad my Jean is safe." "Yes, they are all safe," was the reply. "They are safe in the arms of the Father. I am proud to give all to the cause."

WE STAND SHOULDER TO SHOULDER.

It is not fitting that I should prolong this debate. In the awful dawn of the greatest war the world has ever known, in the hour when peril confronts us such as this empire has not faced for a hundred years, every vain or unnecessary word seems

a discord. As to our duty, all are agreed; we stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain and the other British dominions in this quarrel. And that duty we shall not fail to fulfil as the honour of Canada demands. Not for love of battle, not for lust of conquest, not for greed of possessions, but for the cause of honour, to maintain solemn pledges, to uphold principles of liberty, to withstand forces that would convert the world into an armed camp; yea, in the very name of the peace that we sought at any cost save that of dishonour, we have entered into this war; and while gravely conscious of the tremendous issues involved and of all the sacrifices that they may entail, we do not shrink from them, but with firm hearts we abide the event.

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